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ABSTRACT

This booklet discusses the organization, competence, and motivation that make part-time instructors effective. It shows part-time teachers ways to develop motivation, prepare for each class, conduct sound and enjoyable courses, and find the most useful ways to build their skills. The booklet is organized in four chapters that cover the following topics: (1) the rewards of part-time teaching; (2) effective preparation; (3) creating enthusiasm and making progress; and (4) putting it all together. Four appendixes provide a checklist of success steps for part-time instructors, tips for succeeding in the system, sample course planning guides, and a sample syllabus. (KC)

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Enjoying The Challenge

A Guide for Part-Time Instructors

Prepared by
Richard K. Hofstrand
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Introduction

Every fall, five successful people we know add one more activity to their already busy schedules. Each teaches part time at a local community college or in an adult education program.

- The manager of a department store teaches merchandising to first-year community college business students.
- The president of a bank teaches an introduction to management course at the same community college.
- A financial-planning counselor holds two courses in her subject for members of the community.
- The service manager of a large automobile dealership teaches a six-week noncredit course on car repair for the novice.
- The owner of a computer store is one of five part-time instructors teaching basic computer operation.

These busy people all thoroughly enjoy part-time teaching. In fact, they are addicted to it. Why? Because they have developed their teaching skills continuously by devoting their limited time to effective organization, preparation, and self-motivation. They have gained competence and confidence through carefully focused organization, preparation, and a positive, productive attitude. In addition, the valuable experiences these teachers share make their courses worthwhile and extremely popular with students.

Through extensive interviews with many enthusiastic and respected part-time instructors such as these, we have identified a mix of attitudes, characteristics, organizational skills, and teaching methods that contribute to success and enthusiasm. In this book, we will discuss the organization, competence, and motivation that make part-time instructors effective. You will learn proven ways to (1) develop the motivation you need to become an excellent instructor, (2) prepare for each instructional session, (3) conduct sound and enjoyable courses, and (4) find the best, most useful ways to build your skills.

We realize that you have limited preparation time. Therefore, the material in this booklet is designed to focus on the essentials. Examples of material you may have to prepare are found in the appendix, along with a checklist of "success steps." There is much to be studied regarding effective teaching. Additional references on such subjects as using questions to increase student understanding, testing, and preparing effective supplementary course material are available from most college libraries.

Chapter 1

The Rewards of Part-Time Teaching

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"You probably don't remember me. I was a student in your management course at the community college. Your advice on how to handle a difficult employee was very helpful to me. Thanks so much!"

"My husband and children still don't believe I can change the oil and spark plugs in our cars. But they didn't attend your course."

For the instructors we interviewed, such expressions of gratitude are a major source of pride and satisfaction. In fact, the sense of contributing to the welfare of others is one of the principal rewards of teaching. The teachers we interviewed also identified three others: meeting the challenge of instructing, encouraging new approaches to learning and understanding, and increasing mastery of the material they present to students.

Making Contributions

If you ask EXPERIENCED teachers why they teach, they will almost always answer, "Because of the students." For them, the greatest reward is the personal satisfaction of helping others.

Students value an instructor's enthusiasm and knowledge of the subject, but they most appreciate *and* remember the very specific ways that instructor helped them. Some of that specific help could have been as follows:

- To master a process for making something work, like a new computer program.
- To understand how a concept, like the law of supply and demand, operates in real life.
- To realize the importance of using the right combination of ingredients—in chemistry, automobile finishing, or cooking, for example.
- To learn how such subjects as literature, philosophy, and politics can be viewed legitimately from different perspectives.
- To recognize the necessity for detail management in areas such as health, secretarial science, and banking.

Sometimes just one insight gained from your experience will help a student solve a problem or understand complicated material. When former students recognize these efforts, you will immediately realize the contribution you have made to another person's life. Such personal reward and satisfaction make all the effort worthwhile. In fact, your classes may become such exciting experiences that teaching will prove addictive.

Meeting Challenges

Instructing others is a challenge. It is extremely difficult to describe clearly and effectively something that you know well enough to do almost unconsciously. Showing others how to sell, to supervise, to prepare a financial plan, to repair a car, or to operate a computer is a challenge. Theaching a skill, for example, requires you to slow down, to identify, to organize specific points, and to present each concept with adequate examples.

It is difficult to face a class, to establish control over it, and to provide its directions. Walking into your class for the first time can be threatening. A group of students will be waiting, perhaps with skepticism about taking your course. They my have questions or sit in silence waiting for you to speak. Some will have difficulty understanding the material. On occasion, some may exhibit a lack of interest. Certain students my be tired and unable to concentrate. A few may challenge your knowledge of the subject or interpretation of the material. Because these students come to your class with different backgrounds and experiences, their reactions to you as an instructor will be diverse.

When you successfully meet these and other student challenges, you will feel an immense sense of accomplishment and excitement. As your course progresses, you must sustain your own and the students' interest. Encouraging students to think will lead you to think also. Answering students' questions, solving problems, creating problems for students to solve, and developing learning exercises will be mentally stimulating.

Each course session can be a challenge in itself. Several of the instructors we interviewed said that they felt excited at the end of each session over what they and their students had accomplished. And as excitement increases, session by session, so does the motivation of teacher and students alike.

Encouraging New Approaches

A computer programming instructor told us about a simple computer subroutine he had used for several years. He told us he could demonstrate it without giving it much thought. A student who had forgotten the exact program recreated it on a quiz but with an easier and faster approach. The instructor immediately sensed the value of his student's creativity. Now he gives students extra points toward their grade if they create an alternative program that accomplishes the same result.

Every course you instruct will be a rich resource. Through it, you will have an opportunity to create, to explore, and to experiment with new ideas and concepts. Teaching a specific occupational skill, for example, will cause you to think twice about *what* you do and *how* you do it. A student

with little knowledge of the subject may ask questions that start you thinking about new solutions to old problems.

When you relax and encourage their ideas, students will present new and valuable perspectives. They may ask:

"Why did you?"

"Why didn't you?"

"Would this approach work?"

"Could we change this method to _____?"

Those questions create an exchange of ideas that produce new learning and understanding.

Classrooms are among the best places for investigation and criticism. Away from the pressures of work, new ideas and solutions difficult to find during busy days will emerge more easily.

Increasing Your Mastery of the Subject

Experienced part-time instructors emphasize how much more they understand about their subject after teaching the entire course. For those who run a bank, a hospital unit, a service department, or a retail store, the concepts underlying daily practice are made clearer. You will find that others may approach the subject differently, giving you the chance to consider new ways to handle professional responsibilities.

While preparing the course, you will have a reason to examine the latest literature on the subject. You will also find it useful to talk to other part-time or full-time instructors, to learn how they organize the course, to gain their perspectives of where problems might occur, and to share techniques that motivate students.

Regardless of the subject, if you listen, read, and prepare for each session, you will gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter. This heightened understanding of concepts and practice will carry over into daily life and will increase your enthusiasm for professional responsibilities.

Once you have recognized and begun to enjoy the rewards that part-time teaching affords, you are likely to become addicted to this enjoyable and beneficial activity. To attain these rewards, however, requires careful preparation for both the whole course and each individual session. The subject of effective preparation is the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 2

Effective Preparation

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The Rewards of Part-Time Teaching

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Creating Enthusiasm and Making Progress

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Identifying Your Audience

Effective preparation begins with considering the students attending your credit or noncredit course. The group may be diverse: young men and women, recent high school graduates, and long-time professionals. Most of your students will lack familiarity with the material *you* are about to present.

Many courses are experiencing an increase in older students. Special attention should be given to the unique learning styles of adults. Older learners appreciate:

- Greater involvement in the learning process.
- A variety of practical examples that will enable them to use their work and life experiences.
- Respect for their diverse and valuable experiences.
- Recognition of the demands they face from professional and personal responsibilities.
- Recognition for the progress they make mastering new material and attention to building their confidence.
- Awareness of the different reasons they may have for participation.

All teaching assignments are demanding. However, preparing to work with adult learners takes extra effort. The added challenge may stem from several factors: the view adults have toward learning, the reason for participation (whether from personal desire or externally imposed requirements), the circumstances related to their work.

Regardless of whom you instruct, enthusiasm for the subject, commitment to learning, and sensitivity to students are especially important. Remember that new material can be extremely difficult to learn. Students may experience apprehension when trying to understand it, and they need carefully paced instruction. There may be unusual circumstances or hardships affecting student performance. You can be more effective by being attentive to the special learning needs and unique characteristics of each student.

Developing a Strategy

Wanting to do the best possible job and having time to do it can prove to be competing challenges. As a part-time instructor, you have other job as well as family responsibilities to consider. Although we can suggest how to prepare for and conduct a class or program, you will have to fit this obligation among other priorities.

Preparing a weekly schedule is an effective method for handling this juggling act. The schedule presented in Illustration 1 allows you to identify full-time responsibilities and to include preparation time along with actual instruction.

ILLUSTRATION 1. WEEKLY TIME AND EFFORT PLANNING GUIDE

The following guide is intended to help you plan, a week at a time, your time and effort in preparing to instruct.

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
6:00 A.M.							
7:00							
8:00	work	work	work	work	work	course	
9:00						prep	
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00 P.M.	work	work	work	work	work		
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00	scouts	class	teach	choir			
8:00		prep					
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							

Allowing yourself opportunities to prepare and to review material before each session will build your confidence as an instructor. The final few minutes prior to class start-up should not be spent rushing to assemble material and to write class notes.

Identifying when to plan is crucial to successful instruction regardless of whether you teach an entire course or only instruct occasionally. The nervousness you might feel will be far short of the near-paralysis that unprepared part-time instructors experience.

Quality of instruction will increase proportionately with preparation time. Instructors need opportunities to mold their presentations and to add those valuable second ideas, extra examples, and challenging questions that increase learner motivation and understanding. The instructors we interviewed were quick to identify adequate advance planning as a major cause of success.

Along with identifying *when* to plan, successful instructors know *how much time* is needed to prepare thoroughly. A common guide is two hours of preparation for each hour of instruction. The amount of time dedicated to preparation can be reduced after you become familiar with the subject and your audience.

When you have only a limited amount of time to get ready, you will need to rely on a *routine* to prepare for instruction. A simple but effective routine we suggest is extremely versatile and can be used for a semester-length course, a one-week workshop, or an hour's training activity.

1. Consider what you know about the participants, especially their experience, knowledge, and expectations. Visualize those students with your mind's eye. Analyze their positive or negative attitudes *and* what methods will best capture and retain their attention. Try to identify how you can present your material in a way that is most attractive to them. Be especially attentive to their desire for involvement. Some students are accustomed to passive learning and resist more than occasional participation. Think of how these students might be drawn into group discussions. Pay careful attention to the examples you will need to ensure their understanding of the subject.

   The person who asked you to be an instructor can provide valuable insights on the group and possibly tell you how theoretical or practical material should be, what problems to avoid, and how best to involve participants.

2. Assess the ways in which participants might be distracted from concentrating during instruction. Are they tired from spending a full day at work? Is your course competing for attention during a particularly tense period in their lives? Is someone or something in

or near the class creating a commotion? These and other conditions could reduce their energy levels, their ability to listen, and their appreciation for your presentation.

3. Design an approach that will produce excitement and enhance the learning process. Use your understanding of the audience and their potential level of enthusiasm to decide:
   - What can and should be accomplished in the time available?
   - What material must be covered if goals are to be achieved?
   - How much should you speak and how much they should discuss and question?
   - What activities (such as case studies, sample problems, or individual assigments) should be used to involve participants?
   - How should you assess what has been learned?
   - When should you reinforce material and summarize before continuing?

   You can write all this information in a format similar to the one in Illustration 2. The outline should include all the necessary details of the course or presentation. In Appendix 3 are examples of plans for credit and noncredit courses, and in Appendix 4, a complete syllabus. Preparing for the entire course prevents you from forgetting learning activities selected for a particular audience.

ILLUSTRATION 2. PLANNING GUIDE

Course:

Goal:

Objectives:

Lecture/Discussion Mix:

Activities to involve students:

Methods to assess learning:

Experienced instructors prepare more material than they might need for each presentation. Cutting out material is easier than trying to find information for a remaining 20 or 30 minutes. If you are conducting a course or a series of presentations, plan at least two sessions in advance. If you do have extra time, you can move into the new material.

4. Once you have completed the outline, select from the following methods to involve and interest students:
   - Allow them to suggest what they wish covered in addition to the topics you have planned.
   - Obtain information about their experience and knowledge that can contribute to class discussions.
   - Use case studies or examples that will help students apply your material to their situations.
   - Provide time for students to work alone or in small groups on aspects of the course material.
   - Include demonstrations, films, or other visual aids to clarify the subject further.
   - Pace the presentation of material to allow adequate time for questions.
   - Reinforce progress made by individuals or the group.
   - Review what has been accomplished as additional reinforcement.
   - Identify future topics and preparation that will be necessary.

   Be sure to select methods that are compatible with both your style and your material.

Planning produces a mental motion picture of what you want to accomplish in the classroom and allows you to begin systematic planning of the entire course with confidence. Combining well-founded self-assurance with a routine for each class session increases your potential for successful instruction.

Establishing Preclass Routine

Effective teaching requires time—time to organize thoughts, to draft a syllabus, to clarify instructional objectives, and to determine grading standards. In addition to the scheduled class hours and lesson preparation, allow for additional out-of-class time. During this time, students can meet with you before and after class, can request a review of their "homework," can telephone to discuss class assignments, and otherwise can engage you in unplanned activities.

Good teaching also requires energy, enthusiasm, caring, and creati-

vity. After a full day at work, you will have to generate another "charge of energy" to teach the course. Students, especially those who also have worked a full day, will need to be motivated and excited for an evening's session. Here are some suggestions to recharge your batteries:

- Before an evening session, eat a leisurely but light meal, preferably at a nice restaurant where you can enjoy the total experience. Salads, fruit, fish, poultry, and breads are best. Avoid heavy, full meals such as meats, gravies, and similar foods. These will put you in the mood for a nap about halfway through the session.
- Avoid drinking alcohol before the session. It may be tempting to enjoy a cocktail or glass of wine with your meal, but it will deplete the energy level needed to sustain an exciting class period.
- Wear comfortable clothing appropriate to the class you are instructing. Your shoes should provide solid support and should keep your back and feet free from the pain associated with standing for two or three hours.
- Plan ahead. Have your materials ready and arrive ahead of time. Hurrying at the last minute will dissipate your "teaching energy."
- Do not work extensively with individual students before class starts. We watched one instructor who arrived an hour before the scheduled meeting time and was so enthused about the evening that he gave early arriving students mini-lectures from his presentation. By the time the session was officially under way, half the students had already heard the information and became bored. In addition, the instructor lost enthusiasm because so much energy was expended prior to the session. Instead of using up energy before class, help students during the break or after the session when you can relax.
- Lie down and rest. There's nothing wrong with arriving a few minutes early and finding a quiet, secluded place where you can lie down (try a carpeted floor) and rest. You might even take a short nap. Even if you don't sleep, the relaxation will refresh you, and you'll be eager for an exciting session. One instructor uses a meditation-type of relaxation before every class, and when the session begins, he is relaxed and confident.

Allowing for Preclass Review

Successful part-time instructors make a habit of preclass review. They report increased attention to the upcoming activity and less mental distraction. It is important to shut out the other major responsibilities in your life. This short period for review enables you to shift roles and to concentrate on instructing.

- Before each session, take stock of your assets as a teacher: your

appreciation for the needs of students of various ages; your careful advanced preparation; your experience with and enthusiasm for your material. With these assets you should approach each session confidently.

- Consider the nature of your responsibility. Teaching demands readiness, determination, and a certain amount of worry that often builds your motivation. It is like a competitive sporting event. A great deal of your emotional energy will be focused on doing well.
- Focus your attention on instructing: allocate time in advance to review material and to prepare psychologically for the experience. Find a quiet location to reread your notes, to examine learning activities planned for the session, and to think about the audience. Use your mind's eye to picture the class and how you will conduct it. Do this away from the classroom to avoid interruptions from students.

Adequate time for preclass review will allow you to enter the class determined, prepared, and focused. And once you have taken control over your material and yourself, you will be able to take control of the learning about to take place.

Avoiding Chalkboard Fright

Teaching requires that *you* lead the group. You will need to stand up in front of the students and instruct them. If you've never done it before, it may cause a bit of "stage fright" or, in this case, "chalkboard fright." You might feel "butterflies" in your stomach; your palms may become sweaty; you may feel twinges of anxiety. It is a normal, human reaction. The following suggestions can help you overcome chalkboard fright:

- Use the adrenaline in your system to make your teaching more exciting and forceful. Ethyl Barrymore, the famous stage actress, once said that she nearly always got butterflies before a performance. If she didn't, her acting performance was not as good as it could have been. In other words, use the energy to your benefit.
- Relax. No one is expecting you to be super-human. The students want to know what you know. They want you to succeed because if you don't, they don't. They're not asking you to perform; they just want you to be concise, clear, fair and, above all, human.
- If the nervousness gets too strong, schedule some strenuous physical activity before each session. The activity will reduce the adrenaline in your system and will help you relax.
- Be yourself; be human. All you need to do is to teach others as you would like to be taught yourself.

Organizing Your Lecture

One of the best ways to avoid fear—and failure—as an instructor is to organize each lecture or presentation in advance. Whether you are an instructor who lectures "straight" with few interruptions from students or a Socratic type who draws ideas out of learners by well-directed questioning, you will need careful organization to ensure that your material is presented according to your plans.

Two basic lecture formats-the *inductive* and the *deductive*- have been tried and tested since the days of the ancient Greeks. The *inductive* format begins with a question or problem to solve and systematically accumulates evidence until an answer emerges. This format has the advantage of involving the students in an exciting kind of intellectual detective story. This approach is especially valuable when the *reasoning* behind the material is important for future application. For example, by showing students how to arrive at a productive interpretation of a Faulkner novel, you give them the logical tools they need to approach other works of literature on their own. The inductive format is effective for teaching topics ranging from diagnosis of engine "ping" to creative parenting approaches. A disadvantage of the inductive format is the time required to flesh out the logical steps needed to arrive at a satisfactory resolution.

The *deductive* format is more conducive to a quick and efficient transfer of information. This format begins where inductive method ends—with the *answer*, the basic information to be imparted—and then provides selective details to explain or justify this information. The deductive format is particularly useful when there is a great deal of highly technical or complicated material to cover. The deductive method is effective when a clear understanding of material depends upon recognizing a progression of steps or contingencies, as in computer programming or chemistry.

Regardless of the format you choose, several important rules will help you succeed as a lecturer:

1. Provide a brief introduction explaining what you intend to accomplish and how you will go about it. Be sure to lay out ground rules so that students know when they may ask questions or provide contributions to the discussion.
2. Make clear transitions between major points in the lecture. Whether using an inductive or a deductive approach, you must indicate when you have finished one "question" and gone on to the next.
3. Support your generalizations with a clear exposition of the reasoning behind them and provide sufficient practical examples to show how they work in "real life."
4. Give students a chance to ask questions and watch their faces for signs of confusion.

5. Pitch your level of diction toward the least-experienced segment of the class. Do not use technical jargon that only experienced professionals understand. If you must use jargon, be sure to define each unfamiliar term at first use.
6. Summarize the points you made in a brief conclusion and show how this lecture applies to the overall course design. Lecture-discussion is the form used most in community college classes. Greater student involvement is likely. The instructor can raise questions, ask for reactions, *and* determine if points are understood. Class exercises such as case studies or discussions can be added for variety.

Speaking Effectively

However thoughtfully, creatively, and intelligently you have constructed the lecture, if the audience cannot understand or remember it, then all your careful preparation will have been a pointless exercise. In fact, this is often the case for inexperienced speakers, but it need not be the case for you if you follow a few simple guidelines for effective speaking:

1. Pamper your voice before you are due to speak. Don't carry on lengthy conversations—or arguments—before class. Keep your mouth and throat moist with cool water, not coffee or tea (caffeine may make you nervous), and certainly not soft drinks (you might end up with the hiccoughs). Avoid milk and milk products before you speak: They will coat your throat and make your voice husky. If your throat feels a little "coated," try sucking on a wedge of lemon, an old actor's trick.
2. Pitch your voice slightly lower than your everyday conversational range. Excitement can cause your voice to rise unconsciously, and it requires a conscious effort to keep it down. But the effort is worthwhile: Nothing is more annoying to a captive audience than a speaker who tends to squeal.
3. Speak more slowly than usual. Excitement might make your speech more rapid as well as high-pitched. You will need to compensate for this effect or you may end up sounding like a record on the wrong speed. Additionally, remember that your listeners may be attempting to take notes and will surely be attempting to commit your main points to memory. Even ordinary conversational rates of speed are too fast to allow for effective assimilation, so slow down.
4. Pause for an extra few beats between main points to give notetakers a chance to catch up. If you move too fast from point to point, listeners will have a tendency to forget each point as they try to keep up with the next.

5. Do not make unnecessary noises (such as "uh") and do not use formalized phrases (such as "you know"). If you find yourself doing this, you are probably trying to speak too fast.
6. Make only purposeful motions with your hands, such as writing on the chalkboard or pointing to an exhibit. If you don't consciously work to keep your hands still, you may find yourself playing with your hair or indulging some other distracting behavioral tic.
7. Maintain an erect but relaxed posture. Keep your back straight and carry your weight slightly over the balls of your feet, poised for graceful movement. People who stand with their weight over their heels get tired faster and also have a tendency to trip when suddenly required to move. Do stand, however, because enthusiasm is difficult to generate from a sitting position.
8. Shift your gaze regularly throughout the audience. This involves everyone in the "conversation" and makes the listeners feel that they are receiving individual attention. Make eye contact only briefly. Staring into a student's eyes can seem disconcerting and even accusatory. If you are uncomfortable looking at faces, try looking at foreheads or neckties. This technique is nonthreatening to a shy speaker and generally undetectable by the audience. Do *not* look at the ceiling, the floor, your shoes, or the clock. And whatever you do, do not *read* to students, except for short relevant sections.
9. Practice at home before a mirror or better yet, a video tape camera. You will be surprised how different you appear from the way you imagine yourself.

By following these simple guidelines, your experience as an instructor may be very satisfactory. You might even sense some of the exhilaration that skilled performers feel holding the attention of attentive audiences. But even if you never become truly accustomed to public speaking, at least you will be able to make yourself understood and, most importantly, get on with the essential business of teaching.

Once you have prepared for the course by organizing your material and by sharpening your presentation skills, it is time to create a classroom atmosphere that fosters enthusiasm for learning and achievement. How to create this enthusiasm is described in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Creating Enthusiasm and Making Progress

A good way to begin the first session is to describe what you plan to accomplish and to explain how you intend to create learner enthusiasm and involvement. The following steps can help to increase your students' confidence in you, to encourage participation in the class, and to obtain preliminary information about your students:

1. Introduce yourself and explain your background, experience, and interest in the subject. (Refer to the sample biography in Illustration 3.)
2. Ask all students to introduce themselves and to offer information about their backgrounds and experience (see Illustration 4). Make an effort to encourage students to talk about themselves.

Chapter 1 The Rewards of Part-Time Teaching

Chapter 2 Effective Preparation

Chapter 4 Putting It All Together

Appendix 1 Checklist of "Success Steps" for Part-Time Instructors

Appendix 2 Succeeding In the System

Appendix 3 Sample Course Planning Guides

Appendix 4 Sample Syllabus

ILLUSTRATION 3. SAMPLE BIBLIOGRAPHY

John Doe is senior loan officer at the First Bank of Centerville. He received an A.A. in business from Lake Worth Community College and a B.A. in business from Central State University.

John has been interested in banking since high school. While attending college, he worked at First Bank as a teller and later as a loan officer. John regularly attends American Banking Institute seminars, and he often conducts portions of First Bank's employee orientation program.

For the past two years, John has been named outstanding bank employee.

ILLUSTRATION 4. SAMPLE STUDENT INFORMATION FORM

NAME
ADDRESS
JOB TITLE/FUNCTION
COMPANY
PHONE NUMBERS (home) (work)
BEST TIMES TO REACH ME

3. Distribute a pretest to determine what your students already know about the subject; or if appropriate, ask what they know about the topic.
4. Discuss topics that will be highlighted.
5. Relieve students' anxiety by describing the steps you will take to help them understand the material. Your expressed intention to help, along with your sensitivity to possible problems, can help reduce student tension. Mention to the class that some students will understand material faster than others. Use yourself as an example, explaining how long it took for you to master the material.

Be prepared for the kinds of questions found in Illustration 5. You may want to think about them or prepare answers in advance.

ILLUSTRATION 5. QUESTIONS STUDENTS FREQUENTLY ASK

1. How will I be graded?
2. What kinds of tests will be given?
3. How long do you expect papers or class projects to be?
4. Do we have to buy class texts and other material? Are they available in the library?
5. May we call you (the instructor) at work? What are the best times?
6. How can we make up a missed class session?
7. What if there's bad weather and I can't get to class?
8. What happens if I have to miss a class because of business or family?

If you are teaching a lengthy course, use the first session to explain what you plan for the following sessions. A course syllabus will clearly outline what material will be covered, what learning activities will be required, and how progress will be judged. You will find a sample syllabus in Appendix 4.

An effective beginning creates a positive first impression of your preparation, organization, and determination. Your students will feel that their classroom experience will be beneficial, informative, and nonintimidating, as you respond to both individual and group needs. Make an effort to learn students' names if the class is less than 50. Name cards enable you to call students by name and are especially effective in classes with 20 to 30 students.

An Enthusiastic Middle

You may want to begin each class session with a brief review of material already covered. Then concentrate on the objectives for the current session and on the activity designed to foster learning.

Activities that help create enthusiasm for learning include discussions and in-class projects. Student discussions of course topics enhance their understanding of the material. Individual students may be asked to describe effects the topic may have on their lives, or they may describe the differences or similarities between various topics presented during the course. One-time presentations by outside speakers who are *knowledgeable* on the topic prompt excellent discussions. Some instructors stage debates by asking students to prepare differing points of view on a controversial topic. The resulting discussion encourages student participation, thoughtful involvement, and enthusiasm for learning.

In-class individual and/or group projects also foster enthusiasm through involvement. Adult learners especially enjoy group projects because of the social and intellectual interaction with fellow students. You can organize the class members into small groups of four to six members and assign a specific task to complete. Simulations or case studies are excellent prompts to encourage small groups to respond to a situation or to solve a problem. Some part-time instructors foster good-natured competition by asking which group can solve a problem most quickly, which group can produce the largest number of plausible alternatives to a problem, or which group can best organize team efforts to complete a project. In-class projects, especially those requiring problem solving, create much enthusiasm for learning.

Audio and visual aids may be one of the greatest contributors to enhancing enthusiasm. The chalkboard is the time-honored aid for introducing new vocabulary, for sketching and diagraming concepts, and for focusing visual and auditory attention. Overhead transparencies and opaque projections are complementary additions to the chalkboard. Printed handouts, models, physical examples, and other aids help focus attention. Slide and tape presentations, film strips, films, video tapes, and laser video discs also enhance enthusiasm. One caution, however: Any audio/visual aid must be directly related to the concept being taught. Do not show a movie for entertainment's sake. If only part of an audio/visual presentation pertains to the course, show only that part. Keep students' attention focused on what is to be learned. Students will look to you for that help. They are trusting you to help them learn.

The Importance of Testing

Assessing student progress through testing is a vital part of the instructional process for which you are responsible. Students enrolled in

credit courses must be tested to ensure that each has achieved a desired level of proficiency. Students involved in noncredit instruction should also be periodically tested to help them realize their own progress.

Testing also helps instructors assess their teaching proficiency. For example, if a majority of students fail on a particular concept of the test, perhaps the teacher had not clearly presented the material. In addition, testing can help you point out to students how much they have learned. Depending upon the type of students and their confidence level, this encouragement may be especially valuable. Instructors teaching computer literacy stress the importance of applauding student efforts. They are especially sensitive to students' apprehension and fear of failure *and* are determined that all should leave with a feeling of progress.

Assessing student progress may be accomplished either with pencil and paper tests or with performance evaluations. Pencil and paper tests may include true-false, short answer, multiple choice, matching, and essay questions. Most educational institutions have policies, procedures, and materials available to prepare good pencil and paper tests and to interpret their results accurately. If grades are to be given, you will have to follow institutional rules, becoming familiar with them before the class begins.

Performance evaluations are, for many learning situations, a more accurate assessment of what the student knows and is able to do than are pencil and paper tests; however, performance evaluations may be less objective in their results. To improve the objectivity of performance evaluations, use checklists to evaluate each step as it is performed by the student in a laboratory or, preferably, in a real-life situation. Ask others such as more experienced instructors, the school's administrators, and the student's employer or supervisor to observe the student's performance. Assemble a group of knowledgeable people to question each student; their collective judgement as a "jury of experts" can be very accurate in testing. Instructors can provide help in conducting performance evaluations. Performance appraisals coupled with pencil and paper tests serve as a sound basis for assessing student progress.

Through all of these activities, you will sense learning taking place if you are in control, responsive, and continually alert to needs of individuals as well as to the entire group. When your enthusiasm reaches the students, the entire class will work together to make the session a beneficial and enjoyable experience.

A Dynamic Conclusion

To bring the session to a dynamic conclusion, analyze and review what has been covered. You will enable students to leave with a sense of

progress as well as enthusiasm for future sessions if you include the following steps in your closing:

1. Review goals and key points.
2. Applaud individual and group progress.
3. Identify problems and suggested solutions.
4. Announce material to be covered next.
5. Emphasize work to be done for subsequent sessions.

In summary, a successful session contains an appropriate mix of enthusiasm, clear direction, and control, as well as responsiveness and sensitivity to participant needs. If you understand the importance of these qualities, you are ready to enjoy the unique opportunity of part-time teaching.

Chapter 4

Putting It All Together

Throughout the prior chapters, you have read about three essential ingredients of successful part-time teaching: competence, confidence, and control. All are connected. If you improve one, the other two will be strengthened. For example, if you are more confident, you will also feel more competent and will have more control of the class. Conversely, if any one of the ingredients is weakened, the other two will also suffer. For example, if you doubt your competence, your confidence and control will slump. *Attitude is the key to successful part-time teaching.* Your attitude in the classroom will communicate either positive feelings or low self-esteem. The material provided in the preceding chapters will enable you to develop the positive attitude attributed to successful part-time instructors. But first, you must want to grow.

Competence

Competence as a part-time instructor has two dimensions: competence in the subject matter and competence in instruction. We believe that you are competent in your subject matter or you would not have been asked to instruct. Competent instruction evolves from instructional enthusiasm and organization.

The steps provided in each chapter of this book have been developed from conversations with many full- and part-time instructors. These instructors reported that these ideas helped them to not only do their jobs well, but also to enjoy their work at the same time. Following the steps outlined in each chapter will help you develop your own system for effective instruction.

Confidence

As you gain more competence, control, and command of the instructional assignment, you will gain more confidence. Belief in your confidence will increase the enjoyment you and your students will experience. The following three ways will help you assess your confidence:

1. *Do a session-by-session analysis of your accomplishments.* After each session, review your accomplishments, whether alone, with your spouse, or with a good friend.
2. *If you recall a mistake, do not dwell on it.* Everyone makes mistakes. Instead of feeling guilty about your error, think of ways you could avoid making that mistake again.
3. *Keep notes of your accomplishments.* They will remind you at later times about specific actions and incidents that bolstered your

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confidence. Reviewing your accomplishments will create a sense of growth and development that will bolster your competence and control. These notes will be a valuable reference the next time you teach.

Asking students for their opinions will provide feedback that you can check against your own analysis. For example, suggest to the group they take a survey of what has been accomplished at certain points, comment on methods used, and suggest areas for improvement.

These reactions may be sought at the beginning or end of each session. There are hazards to encouraging constructive criticism, however. Negative remarks from one hostile student might poison the atmosphere of an otherwise contented and enthusiastic class.

Some instructors distribute a brief evaluation form (see Illustration 6) and use the reactions from students to make necessary changes. Others use informal conversations with individual students before or after their presentations. It is important in "evaluating your evaluations" that you not become discouraged by negative remarks.

ILLUSTRATION 6. SAMPLE COURSE EVALUATION FORM

Please take a moment to complete this form before you leave class this evening. Your comments will help me make necessary changes in organization and operation.

1. What are the positive aspects of the course so far?
   a.
   b.
   c.
2. Are course objectives clear? _____ Yes _____ No
3. In what ways could lectures be improved?
   a.
   b.
   c.
4. Is enough time allowed for questions?
   _____ Yes_____ No If yes, how?
5. Should student participation be increased?
   _____ Yes_____ No If yes, how?
6. What other suggestions do you have for improving the course?
   a.
   b.
   c.

Occasionally your personality, material, or a circumstance over which you have no control will antagonize a student. Some evaluations, especially those from anonymous respondents, can be quite destructive, even vicious. Ignore these and concentrate on fair, politely phrased, and well-considered comments and criticisms. It is unfair to yourself and to your students to allow one malicious or hostile remark to stand out above thirty helpful ones.

If you indicate a willingness to consider useful input, your students will be more likely to give it. In that way the experience becomes not just yours, but the participants' also, and their feelings of "ownership" will make them take a more active part in the learning climate you jointly create.

Control

Control is not the same as inflexibility or authoritarianism. You must plan and communicate course directions clearly while remaining responsive to student needs and open to constructive suggestions. That type of control increases your confidence and heightens your credibility as well.

Appropriate and tactful control fosters progress for the class and greatly increases your ability to succeed as a part-time instructor. Your effectiveness will develop steadily as your control of material and instruction improves. Both you and your students will look back with pride at the accomplishments that were achieved.

Establishing a purposeful routine is the first step in taking control of your class. Your objectives must be clear to you before they can be clear to your students. Take time to review progress toward these goals. Once your routine is established, you can begin to analyze your accomplishments and begin to make improvements. But this can be done only if you are in control.

Rewards

Instructing can be a totally *winning* experience if you focus on the concepts of competence, confidence, and control. You, too, can become "positively addicted" to working with students and will look forward to being invited back. Success in the classroom will instill a feeling that you have met the professional challenge of organizing a body of material, of presenting it logically, and of helping students learn it. Your instructional talent will help them learn specific information, understand and apply concepts, and develop desired skills.

Your understanding of your area of expertise is also likely to increase substantially. Instructing requires effective organization of your knowledge in order to explain concepts that you previously applied unconsciously. Such an experience stimulates thoughts about how you

might approach your full-time work differently. One real estate instructor claims that she gets two or three new ideas about how to better reach her clients from every class she teaches. Instructors in the allied health fields and in agriculture, business, and general studies have made similar comments. Many of them do not have an opportunity to try out new approaches in their full-time jobs because of time constraints and responsibilities. Working with students can provide a vehicle for experimentation and can add new dimensions to your thinking.

You gain something else, too. Your level of confidence increases. In order to maintain your current level of responsibilities while adding instructional duties, you must organize, set priorities, establish routines and concentrate on instruction in order to use time effectively. You can be proud of doing these tasks and *doing them well.*

Appendix 1

Checklist of "Success Steps" for Part-Time Instructors

PREPARATION:

- Clarify with family, friends, and employer your expected rewards for teaching part-time.
- Schedule six weeks of preparation time with about eight hours per week prior to the first class session, if possible. (This is the ideal; in reality, you may have considerably less time.)
- Create from your own experience a listing of the concepts and topics you believe should be included in such a course.
- Examine the recommended or required course textbook.
- Ask the institution for the name of an experienced full-time or part-time instructor with whom you can discuss the course.
- Check out instructional methods taken from a local library.
- Secure and review course syllabi, goals, objectives, and materials from other instructors who teach or have taught the course or related courses. Most colleges require that all sections of the same course use a common syllabus. Do not overlook course items from other institutions or industries.
- Prepare course goals.
- Prepare a course overview and syllabus.
- Identify and compile course materials such as books, handouts, and consumable supplies.
- Schedule duplication of course handouts.
- Schedule instructional activities such as films, videotapes, interactive laser disc presentations, computer-aided instruction, presentations from outside lecturers, field trips, and others.
- Schedule audio/visual equipment to present instructional activities.
- Visit the course classroom and/or laboratory.
- Prepare objectives for each session of what you intend the student to learn.
- Design a student evaluation system that is based on the above objectives.
- Develop a course calendar containing session dates and topic(s) planned for each. Use the institution's master calendar as a basis.
- Prepare lesson plans for the first three class sessions.

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- Prepare visuals such as easel charts, graphs and pictures, overhead transparencies, opaque projections, instructional bulletin boards, and chalkboard drawings.

First Session:

- Arrive 15 to 30 minutes early to prepare the classroom and/or laboratory.
- Greet students as they arrive.
- Introduce yourself to your students and ask them to introduce themselves to each other.
- Hand out course outline or syllabus.
- Present overview of course, especially potential benefits to students.
- Explain the layout of the course textbook.
- Describe your plan for testing and grading. Explain to the students how they can succeed.
- Solicit student questions and reactions.
- Deliver the best presentation possible.
- Immediately after the sessions ends, review accomplishments and prepare for the next session.

Following Sessions:

- Use quizzes to reinforce learning.
- Refine course syllabus to accommodate students' needs and expectations.
- Periodically review student notes to see if they are identifying major points.
- Prepare and give pencil and paper and/or performance tests.
- Provide students with feedback regarding their performance.
- Solicit students' views on progress being made in the course.
- Encourage class discussions through use of instructional questioning.
- Continue to prepare audio and visual materials to enhance your instruction.
- Build in review time.
- Experiment with alternative instructional activities to make learning exciting and rewarding.
- Attend relevant meetings and workshops, especially those provided by the institution for which you are teaching.
- Return student work promptly.

- Talk with full-time and other part-time instructors regarding ideas and activities they have used to improve their teaching.
- At the completion of each session, review your accomplishments and prepare for the next session.

Following the completion of the course, write a letter to the head of the institution (such as the president or director) thanking him or her for the opportunity to teach and describe your greatest reward from your part-time teaching experience.

Keep this checklist with you throughout the course. As you discover other items that you want to remember for future use, add them. You'll be helping yourself.

Appendix 2

Succeeding in the System

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To enjoy and to be effective as a part-time instructor, you should know who is responsible for assistance and how the instructional system operates. Key people to identify include the chairperson of the department or division for the course, the administrator of evening or weekend programs, the administrator in charge of remote facilities, and/or the dean of continuing education.

After you agree to instruct, identify the ways in which these people may assist you. Secretaries or assistants also provide valuable help and often know how to locate material or solve problems when their bosses are absent.

The heads of learning resource centers, libraries and audio/visual departments can explain the services available to students and instructors. How to reserve material for your course, obtain a slide projector, or find a special book are examples of the information they provide.

Your division chair or coordinator will indicate how much time is needed to duplicate material. Personnel in the registration office will provide class rosters and explain how and when registration forms have to be returned.

Custodians will help you with minor problems (missing chalk, room temperature, extra chairs). As your course begins, locate the janitor's work quarters and introduce yourself. Security guards will circulate in some buildings and can be counted on for special assistance if needed. Switchboard operators on duty can help solve problems by phoning offices and locating assistance.

Key locations and proceedures to know include:

- Your classroom and closest parking area
- Restrooms, cafeteria or snack machines, telephones, library, and bookstore (especially to direct students there)
- Registration office— to drop off class rosters and turn in grades
- Department office— to pick up notices and mail (before each class), necessary forms, and supplies.
- Emergency procedures and facilities

Forms to know include:

- W-4 and other payroll forms
- Attendance rosters

- Requests for audio/visual equipment
- Duplicating requests

Most institutions will provide you with a set of ground rules that explain class starting time, allowable breaks, smoking and eating rules, and other regulations.

Appendix 3

Sample Course Planning Guides

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Planning Guide 1

COURSE: Introduction to Computers

GOAL: To introduce students to the potential, basic concepts, terminology, equipment, and basic operation of personal computers.

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, each student will be able. . .

1. To describe orally and to the satisfaction of the instructor, the current and potential impact of computers on our personal and work lives.
2. To define in writing, at least 80 percent of a list of computer terms commonly used in the computer industry.
3. To write an operational computer program for personal use that "runs".
4. To write an operational computer program that "runs" in two (2) different languages.
5. To logically defend, to the satisfaction of other students in the class, a personal opinion regarding the selection of appropriate computer "hardware" and "software" suitable for use in a small business of the student's choice.

LECTURE/DISCUSSION MIX: 60 percent lecture and 40 percent class discussion and work on computer.

ACTIVITIES TO INVOLVE STUDENTS: Exercise to use computer and assorted programs.

METHODS TO ASSESS LEARNING: Pencil and paper examination(s) on terminology and key concepts. Performance appraisal of an actual program to accomplish simulated task or function.

Planning Guide 2

COURSE: Introduction to Robotics

GOAL: To introduce students to the "world of robotics" which includes basic concepts of physics, concepts in the transfer of power, common

nomenclature, applications in home and industry, and design and fabrication of robotics.

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, each student will be able. . .

1. To describe orally to another student and with 85 percent accuracy, the common robotics nomenclature used in robots.
2. To differentiate at above the 95 percent level among mechanical, electrical, pneumatic, and hydraulic modes of induced motion when shown examples of each.
3. To identify at least 10 (ten) examples of current uses of robots and to describe the contribution of each to improving the human condition.
4. To design and build, as one of a three-member team, a simple "pick-&-place" robot. The robot must be operational and demonstrated during career day in the central mall of the local shopping center next spring.

Planning Guide 3

COURSE: Advanced Word Processing

GOAL: To prepare students to effectively enter jobs that require advanced levels of proficiency and competence in contemporary word processing systems found in business and industrial settings.

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, each student will be able. . .

1. To identify to the five word processing "systems" most commonly found in existing business settings.
2. To describe to officials of a business or industry who are contemplating purchasing a word processing system for their central office, the "strengths" and "weaknesses" of the top five (5) systems in terms of:
   - -electronic mail
   - -networking
   - -large text editing
   - -memory capacity
   - -expansion potential
3. To perform advanced word processing functions, to the satisfaction of the instructor, in at least two (2) "systems."

PLANNING GUIDE 4

COURSE: Licensed Practical Nurse Seminar

GOAL: To prepare each student enrolled in the LPN Program to "pass" the state's Board of Review examination for licensure as a Practical Nurse. (This is the first course.)

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this course, each student will be able. . .

1. To describe the content and importance of each of the courses taken previously in the LPN program sequence. Each student's description must be accurate to a level deemed proficient by the instructor and to other seminar students.
2. To "pass" at least eight (8) of the ten (10) sample Board of Review examinations which are provided by the instructor during the course. ("Passing" is defined as correctly answering 90 percent of the test questions.)

PLANNING GUIDE 5

WORKSHOP: Quality Circles: "The How To's"

GOAL: The goal of this noncredit workshop is to help local business people successfully initiate and manage quality circles in their businesses and industries.

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this workshop, each participant will be able. . .

1. To identify and describe six (6)major phases of a quality circle's cycle.
2. To describe the benefits to representatives of management and labor of starting and operating one or more quality circles. (Proficiency will be measured by workshop peers who will view videotapes of each business person's presentation.)
3. To explain any one of the four (4) trouble areas most likely to cause a quality circle to collapse and to describe managerial techniques that can alleviate each trouble area. (Competence in this objective will be measured when the instructor meets with each participant before leaving the workshop.)

Appendix 4
Sample Syllabus

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Course title: ***INTRODUCTION TO MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY***

Instructor: Dr. Jane Adams
(121/232-4000)

Textbook: ***CLINIC DIAGNOSIS*** by Henry Davidson

Meeting time: 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Thursday

Meeting place: Diagnosis Lab
101 Medical Sciences Building
Central Community College

Learning objectives: Upon completion of this course, each student will be able to describe the field of medical technology, recognize the terms common to the field, perform routine laboratory procedures, and describe career opportunities in medical technology.

Topical outline:

Class:	Topic:
1	Course overview Introduction to medical technology film: CAREERS IN MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY
2	Gross biology Resource person: Dr. Pauls - city morgue
3	Microbiology
4	Laboratory inspection - chemistry Lab work
5	Hematology - platelets, Hct, Hb, Sed Rate Lab work
6	Morphology - RBC & WBC Review
7	Mid-term examination
8	Heostasis - prothrombin time, PTT Review of examination
9	Gastric analysis Student reports on lab work
10	Pregnancy testing Lab work
11	Stool/occult blood Film: BLOOD BANKS

12	Blood group and Rh Lab work
13	Sweat chloride - cystic fibrosis Review
14	Final examination All lab reports due
Class format:	Lecture and discussion at each session
Grading:	Mid-term examination: 25% Laboratory procedure: 25% Laboratory reports: 25% Final examination: 25%